(d) whether all hurdles that were put up by Pakistan in regard to trade had been removed and to what extent this joint group will help in removing these hurdles and improve trade relation between the two countries?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI KAMAL NATH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The decision to set up a Joint Study Group (JSG) at the level of Commerce Secretaries of both the countries was taken during the meeting of Commerce Ministers of India and Pakistan in the wings of the Fourth Meeting of SAARC Commerce Ministers held in Islamabad on 22-23 November, 2004.

(c) and (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

Indo-Pak economic cooperation

(c) and (d) The First Meeting of this JSG was held at New Delhi on 22-23 February, 2005. After detailed discussion on promotion of trade and economic co-operation, both sides agreed to constitute Two Working/ Sub-Groups on Customs Co-operation & Trade Facilitation and Non-Tariff Barriers (NTBs). The Terms of References (ToRs) for these sub groups were mutually agreed upon by both sides. During these two days, both sides deliberated upon the future road map in order to enhance trade and economic cooperation. It was also decided to hold the 2nd meeting of the Joint Study Group on mutually agreed dates. The recommendations of this Group would be submitted to the respective Governments for consideration under the framework of the Composite Trade Dialogue. With the setting up of Groups on Non Tariff Barriers and Customs Cooperation & Trade Facilitation, a process has been initiated to identify hurdles in bilateral trade and to address them for proper solutions.

Corruption in Jails

*115. SHRI E.M. SUDARSANA NATCHIAPPAN: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that there is large scale corruption in various jails in the country and under trials are provided with all the luxuries on payment of bribes to the jail officials;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what steps are being taken by Government to check this menace?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI MANIKRAO GAVIT): (a) to (c) "Prisons" is a State subject. The management and administration of prisons fall in the domain of the State Governments. Complaints of corruption are, therefore, addressed to the State Governments which take appropriate action. Recognizing the need for improving the conditions of jails, including the prisoners and prison staff, the Union Government has been providing financial assistance to the State Governments aimed at improving the overall conditions through construction of new jails, capacity expansion of existing jails, construction of staff quarters and improvement of water supply and sanitation.

Funding for police modernisation

*116. DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:
SHRIMATI JAMANA DEVI BARUPAL:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Centre is pursuing policy of arming State Governments to teeth in dealing with overgrowing menace of Naxalites and cross border terrorism;

(b) if so, whether Home Ministry has approached Finance Ministry with a proposal to hike central funding for police modernization in several Naxal hit States from 75 per cent to 100 per cent;

(c) if so, to what extent States have been provided sufficient funds to improve modernisation of police forces in States to meet this threat; and

(d) to what extent these States have been able to control the menace of Naxalites and cross border terrorism?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI SRIPRAKASH JAISWAL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) In the proposal to revise the Scheme for Modernisation of the State Police Forces (MPF Scheme), 9 (nine) Naxalite affected States are proposed to be provided 75% Cetral funding; presently 4(four) of these States, namely Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand are provided 75% Central funding.

(c) Under the current MPF Scheme, the States of Jammu and Kashmir, Assam, Manipur and Tripura which face cross-border terrorism, are provided 100% Central funding; Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Sikkim are provided 75% Central funding; whereas the States of